

LEISURE PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW PANEL

(Meeting held on 27 March 2001)

1. “ON YOUR MARKS” - RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION (REPORT A) (MINUTE NO. 24)

The Panel has noted responses received to a consultation exercise on the issues paper entitled “On Your Marks”, which was designed to form the basis of the Council’s cultural strategy as required by recent legislation.

Although over 700 copies of On Your Marks had been direct mailed to a range of statutory, voluntary and commercial agencies and copies were made available through libraries, only 31 responses had been received. Most of these were extremely supportive, but the Panel was disappointed at the low level of response. The Panel regretted that none of the Town & Parish Councils within the Districts had responded.

It appears that new methods are required to consult with the Council’s partners, users of facilities and other stakeholders. This ties in with the Government’s modernisation agenda and the Council’s own longstanding commitment to partnership with stakeholders.

Accordingly, whilst the positive responses to the consultation document have been noted, a stakeholders’ meeting will be convened to discuss a draft version of the Council’s cultural strategy. All District Councillors will be invited to attend.

2. TOURISM SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (REPORT B) (MINUTE NO. 25)

Members have noted that consultation with stakeholders has now taken place following adoption of the findings and the related Action Plan, which have emerged out of the Best Value Review of the Tourism Service. There has been strong support for service delivery by the Council and consultees have generally expressed concern over the level of net cost of reductions required.

The concerns expressed by consultees have been shared by members, particularly in the light of the current foot and mouth crisis, which has led to a consequent loss of income to many tourist businesses.

The Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 21 March 2001 approved the Tourism Service Improvement Programme. The Programme will be monitored by the Panel in future, with updating reports being presented at every other meeting.

**3. RECREATION CENTRES - BEST VALUE REVIEW REPORT (REPORT C)
(MINUTE NO 26)**

The Panel has noted that the Best Value Review of Recreation Centres considered by Policy and Resources Committee has shown that users of the services valued them highly and regarded them as being competitive with private providers.

The report on the review of the service included details of method used during the review; illustrated the review process and put it into general context. Outcomes were also identified. Updating reports on the progress of the Implementation Plan will be made periodically to the Panel.

The Panel has resolved that the balance between delivering community outcomes and service costs be subjected to continuous review, and the evaluation of alternative methods of service delivery, based on the results of the current benchmarking exercise, will be presented to the Panel in Autumn 2001.

4. BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT (REPORT D) (MINUTE NO 27)

In noting the current financial position, the Panel has congratulated the Council's officers on the continuing high level of financial performance at the five Recreation Centres, particularly with regard to the current stringent financial guidelines in operation and increased external competition.

Councillor J A G Hutchins JP
CHAIRMAN